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A Message From the Dean

Alan M. Kelly
University of Pennsylvania

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A Message from the Dean

Recently, we named the **Walter Flato Goodman Center for Comparative Medical Genetics** (CCMG) in honor of **Walter F. Goodman**, a renowned breeder, exhibitor, and



judge of Skye terriers (see page 6). Walter always has the interest of dogs at heart, and naming the Center in his honor reflects his commitment to and passion for canine health.

Investigators in the CCMG have been at the forefront of genetic disease research for more than three decades. They have made substantial contributions to the diagnosis and control of genetic diseases within animal populations, and to the understanding and treatment of genetic disease using the animal homologues as models for research in areas such as gene therapy. More than 50 new animal homologues of human genetic diseases in various species have been discovered by the CCMG.

In recent years, the group has developed a number of DNA tests to detect affected and carrier animals for a variety of genetic diseases in the dog and cat. Such tests enable breeders to select away from affected and carrier animals, reducing, and eventually eliminating, certain genetic diseases.

Through the sequencing of the canine genome, completion of which is expected in

2004, much new information will become available. Knowledge of the genes present in the canine genome will allow researchers to describe genetic variations between breeds of dogs, to understand the genetic basis for the behavioral characteristics of specific breeds, to look for changes in gene expression when disease occurs, and identify metabolic pathways in normal and disease state. The latter may lead to new treatments. It will eventually allow for the examination of all the genes of one individual simultaneously, for one or more mutations. Further, it will allow for comparison between the canine genome and the human genome, to identify similar disease-causing genes.

Completion of the human genome project is changing the face of medicine and will continue to do so for years to come. The canine genome project will have a similar effect

in veterinary medicine and the Walter Flato Goodman Center for Comparative Medical Genetics will play an important part in using these new tools for combating and preventing genetic and other diseases in animals and humans.

As a measure of the importance the Medical School attaches to advances in canine genetics, Dr. Arthur Rubenstein, dean of the Medical School, and I shall jointly sponsor a workshop on the topic in December. To my knowledge, this is the first time that the veterinary and medical school deans have worked together in this way and it is a healthy sign of the increasingly collaborative direction of biomedical research.

Alan M. Kelly

The Gilbert S. Kahn Dean of Veterinary Medicine

Class of 2007 Alumni Legacy Students

Penn Veterinary Medicine takes pride in the admission of alumni legacy students. They provide a vital link through the generations of the School's alumni. Photographed in the Ryan Veterinary Hospital Emergency Service: **Tisha Ebling**, sister of Tony L. Ebling, V'03, and **Cristina Weiner**, daughter of Thomas J. Weiner, V'78.



Photograph by Addison Geary/addisongeary.com

Alumni and Friends Celebrate in the Big Apple

On October 24, nearly 50 alumni and friends of Penn Veterinary Medicine attended a reception at the New-York Historical Society in conjunction with the special exhibition, "Petropolis: A Social History of Urban Animal Companions." Gilbert S. Kahn generously underwrote the reception to help the School renew ties with its many alumni and friends in the New York City area.

In 1993, Kahn, a breeder, exhibitor, and judge of purebred dogs and a supporter of animal welfare and canine health issues, made a gift to name the deanship of Penn Veterinary Medicine. The Gilbert S. Kahn Dean of

Veterinary Medicine at Penn was the first endowed veterinary deanship in North America.

The exhibition provided a superb setting to celebrate Penn Veterinary Medicine in the Big Apple. In addition to welcoming remarks from **Dean Alan M. Kelly**, attendees heard **Dr. James Serpell**, the Marie A. Moore Associate Professor of Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare and director of the Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society, speak about people's relationships with animals.

To view the "Petropolis" exhibition online, visit www.purina.com/petropolis/default.asp.



Gilbert S. Kahn and Dean Kelly